

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A ~~computer-implemented~~ method of retrieving product distribution information comprising:

(a) storing a plurality of relationship agreements from computer-accessible memory where each relationship agreement identifies a buyer, a seller and a product to be provided from said seller to said buyer,

(b) retrieving a first relationship agreement from computer-accessible memory, wherein the first relationship agreement identifies a first entity as said buyer, a second entity as said seller, and a first product as said product,

(c) processing the information stored for the first agreement with a computer processor, wherein the processor determines ~~determining~~ whether a second relationship agreement stored in the computer-accessible memory identifies the seller in said first relationship agreement as a buyer in said the second relationship agreement, and determines whether the product in the second relationship agreement relates to said the product in the first relationship agreement, and returns the identity of the second agreement depending on the result, and

~~(d) retrieving said second relationship dependant upon the result of the step of determining,~~

(d) generating a product order pursuant to the identified second agreement.

2. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of storing a third relationship agreement identifying ~~said the~~ seller in the second relationship agreement as a buyer in the third relationship agreement, and where the product in the third relationship agreement is related to the product in the second relationship agreement.

3. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said product is a stamp.

4. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the product in the first relationshipagreement is a first product, the product in the second relationshipagreement is a second product, and the first and second products are related if the first product is a part or all of a second product.

5. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said product is a service or a product and a service.

6. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said steps of storing relationshipagreement information further comprises storing the compensation which seller agrees to accept for said product from said buyer.

7. (previously presented) The method of claim 6 wherein said compensation is the price of the product.

8. (previously presented) The method of claim 7 wherein said compensation is a commission.

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said first entity is a class of entities.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 9 wherein said class is the general public.

11. (currently amended) The method of claim 9 wherein said step of retrieving said first relationshipagreement information comprises displaying to said first entity at least two products associated with those relationshipagreements identifying said first entity as said buyer, and determining said first relationshipagreement information based upon the product selected by an entity of said class.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of storing a description of said product.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 12 wherein said description comprises an image, a textual description, or an image and a textual description.

14. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

(a) said first entity requesting the product from said second entity and storing said request,

(b) storing a request for said product by said second entity to said third entity based on the second relationshipagreement information.

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 14 further comprising notifying said third entity of said request.

16. (previously presented) The method of claim 14 wherein said requests includes the quantity of said product.

17. (previously presented) The method of claim 14 wherein said requests include the shipping destination or destinations of said product.

18. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said step of retrieving said second relationshipagreement information comprises searching for relationshipagreements wherein the buyer of the relationshipagreement identifies the seller of said first relationshipagreement and the product of the relationshipagreement identifies the product of said first relationshipagreement.

19. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of storing additional relationshipagreements associated with said product; repeating said step of retrieving said second relationshipagreement by recursively assuming that some of the values of said first relationshipagreement are equal to the values of said second relationshipagreement.

20. (currently amended) The method of claim 19 wherein said step of repeating terminates when there is no relationshipagreement identifying the seller of said second relationshipagreement as a buyer of the same product in another relationshipagreement.

21. (currently amended) A ~~computer-implemented~~ method of providing information about a product including typesetting comprising:

(a) storing data representing a product available from a mid-level entity to a class of customers in a computer-accessible memory, said product including typesetting;

(b) storing data, in a computer-accessible memory, representing an agreement by a top-level member to provide said product to said mid-level member;

(c) receiving a customer request from a customer of said class of customers for said product, said customer request including typesetting information describing said typesetting;

(d) storing said customer request in a computer-accessible memory;

(e) causing a computer processor to retrieve said agreement from said computer-accessible memory based on the identity of said product and the identity of said mid-level member associated with said customer request, wherein the agreement identifies the mid-level member as the recipient of the product provided by the top-level member;

(f) said processor using the retrieved agreement to generate ~~ing~~ a second request that said top-level member provide said product to said mid-level member, said second request identifying said typesetting information;

(g) transmitting said second request to said top-level member.

22. (previously presented) The method of claim 21 wherein said class of customers comprises a single entity.

23. (previously presented) The method of claim 21 further comprising storing data representing an agreement by a third member to provide said product to said top-level member; retrieving said agreement by said third member based on the identity of said product and the identity of said top-level member.

24. (previously presented) The method of claim 23 wherein said typesetting information comprises an image.

25. (previously presented) The method of claim 24 further comprising the steps of receiving a plurality of requests from a plurality of customers of said class of customers, and wherein the image associated with one customer request is different from the image associated with another customer request.

26. (previously presented) The method of claim 25 wherein said step of storing said customer requests from said customers comprises storing said different images in the same file format.

27. (previously presented) The method of claim 26 further comprising the step of said top-level member retrieving said image.

28. (previously presented) The method of claim 27 further comprising the step of converting said image from said file format to a different file format before said step of said top-level member retrieving said image.

29. (previously presented) The method of claim 25 wherein said step of storing said customer requests from said customers comprises storing said different images in different file formats.

30. (previously presented) The method of claim 29 wherein said different file formats correspond with file formats used by said members.

31. (previously presented) The method of claim 21 further comprising the step of manufacturing said product.

32. (previously presented) The method of claim 21 wherein said product is a stamp and said typesetting relates to the impression on said stamp.

33. (previously presented) The method of claim 21 wherein said requests identify said typesetting information by reference to information stored in a database.

34. (previously presented) The method of claim 21 wherein said step of receiving said customer request comprises receiving said customer request over a global telecommunications network.

35. (currently amended) A ~~computer-implemented~~ method of retrieving information comprising:

(a) storing first relationshipagreement information and second relationshipagreement information in computer-accessible memory, said relationshipagreement information identifying a buyer, a seller and a first product provided from said seller to said buyer,

(b) said first relationshipagreement information identifying a first entity as said buyer, a second entity as said seller, and a first product as said product,

(c) said second relationshipagreement information identifying said second entity as said buyer, a third entity as said seller, and a second product as said product,

(d) retrieving said first relationshipagreement information,

(e) computer processing the first agreement information so as to retrieveing said second

relationshipagreement information based on the identity of said whether the computer-accessible memory indicates that the second entity is indicated as being both a seller in the first agreement information and a buyer in the second agreement information.

36. (currently amended) A system for storing information about buyers and sellers of products comprising:

(a) a database containing a plurality of relationshipagreement records, each said relationshipagreement record identifying a buyer, a seller and a product provided from said seller to said buyer,

(b) a processor for retrieving a second relationshipagreement record based on a first relationshipagreement record, whereby said buyer entity identified in said second relationshipagreement record is the same entity as the seller identified in said second relationshipagreement record, and whereby said product identified in said second relationshipagreement record is related to said product identified in said first relationshipagreement record.

37. (previously presented) The system of claim 36 wherein database is stored at a central location.

38. (previously presented) The system of claim 37 wherein said database is stored in a single server.

39. (currently amended) A system for storing information about relationshipagreements between buyers and sellers, said system maintained by an administrator, said system comprising:

(a) data representing an agreement by a middle entity to provide a product to a bottom entity in exchange for compensation and an agreement by a top entity to provide a related product to said middle entity in exchange for

compensation, none of said entities being said administrator, and

(b) a processor for utilizing said data to process a request for said product from said bottom entity to said middle entity such that said request generates a request for said product from said middle entity to said top entity based on the middle entity being identified as the buyer in one of the stored agreements and the seller in the other stored agreement.

40. (previously presented) The system of claim 39 wherein said data further comprises another agreement by another entity to provide said product to said top entity.

41. (currently amended) A ~~computer-implemented~~ method of retrieving information relating to a request for personalized products, said method comprising:

(a) storing, in computer-accessible memory, an agreement by a second entity to provide a product to a first entity,

(b) storing, in computer-accessible memory, an agreement by a third entity to provide said product to said second entity,

(c) said first entity requesting said product from said second entity such that the request includes modifying the product in accordance with personalization information provided by said first entity, said personalization information being particular to said first entity, and

(d) causing a computer processor to generate a request for said product from said second entity to the third entity, wherein the processor determines whether ~~based on said stored agreements and the second entity being~~ is common to both the stored agreements, and wherein the processor includes the personalization information in the ~~said~~ request from said second

entity to said third entity—~~including said personalization information.~~

42. (previously presented) The method of claim 41 wherein said personalization information comprises an image.

43. (currently amended) A ~~computer-implemented~~ method of selling products over the world-wide web, said method comprising:

(a) providing a database centrally storing agreements between a plurality of members to sell a product;

(b) sending a web page from a first member to a customer, said web page identifying a product that is the subject of one of said agreements of said database;

(c) receiving a request for said product from said customer, said request including an image provided by said customer;

(d) generating a first purchase order from said first member to a second member based on a second agreement stored in said database, said purchase order including said image, and

(e) generating, with a computer processor, a second purchase order from said second member to a third member based on the processor's determination of whether a third agreement is stored in the database such the second member is indicated as a purchaser of the product from the third member~~a third agreement stored in said database,~~ said purchase order including said image.

44. (previously presented) The method of claim 43 further comprising the step of said members storing said agreements by sending information relating to such agreement to said database.

45. (previously presented) The method of claim 43 wherein said product comprises a stamp having an impression representing said image.

46. (previously presented) The method of claim 43 wherein said product comprises a printed item or sign containing said image.